

sitting on his lap. I thought I observed the same mix of awe, fear and delight as in years past, but Jewish eyes can deceive, I guess.

I could be wrong, but I think it would be pretty hard not to guess that it is the "Christmas season" or that "Christmas" is coming if you turned on just about any channel, cable or broadcast, at just about any time of the day or night. Sometimes those reminders also include a request for you to call in and give your credit card number, and do it now, because there are only a few more days until "Christmas."

I'm pretty cheerful about responding to "Merry Christmas" with a "Same to you." I can't recall ever scolding anyone in public or in private for missing the fact that I don't celebrate Christmas. I do try not to say it myself at my synagogue, unless I know for sure the person is Christian, and then I try especially hard to say it.

I'm fond of candy canes. They seem to be available for free in many places at this time of year—"Christmas" time. I try never to pass one up. I even try to like fruit cake, understanding it is one of the typical "Christmas" treats, but I think it may be like gefilte fish—an acquired taste.

If there are some Christians who think that Christmas has become too commercial—the symbol of Christmas being more the Visa or Mastercard than the nativity scene—then I think they deserve to have a serious discussion about that. That discussion, in my Jewish view, would be best held in church, or at home, or just about any place other than the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

PASSPORT SERVICES
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Passport Services Enhancement Act of 2005, H.R. 4501. This bill would amend the Passport Act of June 4, 1920, to authorize the Secretary of State to establish and collect a surcharge to cover the costs of meeting the increased demand for passports as a result of actions taken to comply with section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. I am pleased that we will be funding this security measure required by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act. I look forward to a time when all of the security measures in that Act have been funded.

The failure to fully fund the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act is an indication that Congress has not allotted enough resources to deal with the requirements for security in the fight against terrorism. Another example is the failure to enact my Rapid Response Border Protection Act of 2005, H.R. 4044, which would provide critical resources and support for the men and women who secure our borders, which is essential to our defense against terrorism.

The resources and support in my bill would include the addition of 15,000 Border Patrol agents over the next five years, which would increase the number of agents from 11,000 to 26,000. With more than 8,000 miles of land

and coastal borders to patrol continuously, it is evident that this increase is desperately needed if any semblance of control is to be achieved. The Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would be required to respond rapidly to border crises by deploying up to 1,000 additional Border Patrol agents to a State in which a border security emergency has been declared by the Governor. It also would include 100,000 more detention beds to ensure that those who are apprehended entering the United States unlawfully are sent home instead of being released into our communities. It would assist in cracking down on the problem of fraudulent documents used to enter unlawfully and remain in the United States by adding specialized enforcement agents and establishing cooperative mechanisms with State and local law enforcement agencies. And it includes provisions for critical equipment and infrastructure improvements, such as additional helicopters, power boats, police-type vehicles, portable computers, reliable radio communications, handheld GPS devices, body armor, and night-vision equipment.

Those who object to the cost of such security measures need to recall the enormous costs, not just in monetary terms, of the last terrorist attacks. As Benjamin Franklin wisely noted nearly 270 years ago, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The total cost of my border security bill would only be a very small fraction of the amount being spent fighting terrorism overseas. If we want to prevent another terrorist attack on American soil, we must be prepared to devote whatever resources are necessary to keeping terrorists out of our country. This legislation is designed to help provide more resources for the now required greater utilization of the U.S. passport because of the 9/11 tragedy. Americans will need more passports and the State Department will need more staff. The same can be said for our border security taking short cuts and scrimping on homeland security as this only serves as an open invitation to future disastrous attacks.

TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

HON. RALPH M. HALL
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House and to acknowledge the innovative work of the National Center for Sustainable Development (NCSD) a national 501 c 3 nonprofit corporation headquartered here in Washington, DC and doing good work in my home state of Texas through its Dallas and Austin offices to restore urban and suburban contaminated real estate to new productive use. The Center is now undertaking potentially significant initiatives involving both energy production and air quality in local communities in the recycling of waste products to biodiesel. As Texas is the historic home of innovation and creativity in the use of natural and man made resources, my purpose is to encourage the pilot initiative being undertaken by the Center in the city of Texarkana focusing on the recycling of commercial and industrial food

waste products currently a significant threat to the proper maintenance and efficiency of municipal waste water treatment facilities.

The initiative which I seek recognition for will produce biodiesel from a waste stream currently which is a constraint on the development of services and small business serving the community of Texarkana and placing a burden on the infrastructure that assures proper and environmentally appropriate disposal of grease and waste oils. The undertaking of such a pilot program in Texarkana, Texas is not by chance. The operations of the pilot will be located in an industrial park next to the Red River Army Depot, the main focus of which is the refurbishment and maintenance of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the Humvees currently supporting our mission in Iraq. A portion of the biodiesel rendered from this initiative will be made available to RRAD for their use in testing its properties for both quality as a fuel and its properties as a cleaner burning replacement for conventional petroleum based diesel fuel.

As Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality I recognize that many are pursuing the goals of increased efficiency and air quality that biodiesel holds for helping to satisfy the domestic need for diesel fuel, now in short supply, and that many methods are being evaluated, but my hope is that NCSD can help create and encourage energy production from existing resources now perceived as obstacles to sustainable growth in my district and elsewhere.

By the House and Committee's acknowledgement of the initiative of the National Center for Sustainable Development I am asking for their report on the progress of the Texarkana facility at the milestone of their first six full months of operations. The subcommittee will be interested in the results of this initiative for both its applications for energy production and for improved air quality. I will close by reiterating my support for this worthy initiative and to follow their progress as an example for use by the subcommittee in its critical work.

EXPLANATION OF MISSED VOTES

HON. JOE BARTON
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, December 15, 2005, I was admitted to the hospital upon suffering a heart attack. As a result, I missed three days of votes. I ask that my statement be placed in the appropriate part of the record to reflect how I would have voted on the following rollcall votes, had I been present.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2005:

Nay: On agreeing to the Jackson-Lee (TX) amendment Failed by recorded vote: 162–252 (roll No. 639). An amendment numbered 8 printed in Part B of House Report 109–347 to provide guidelines for implementing the secured alternatives to detention provision in section 402(a).

Aye: On agreeing to the Hunter amendment Agreed to by recorded vote: 260–159 (roll No. 640). An amendment numbered 11 printed in Part B of House Report 109–347 to mandate